

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

7th Meeting 2022 (Session 6), Thursday 3 March 2022

Cross-Party Group Applications

Introduction

1. In accordance with the provisions on Cross-Party Groups (CPGs) set out in section 6 of the Code of Conduct (the Code), proposals for the establishment of CPGs in the Scottish Parliament must be submitted to the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee (the Committee) for its approval.
2. There is one proposed Group for the Committee's consideration.

Proposed CPG on Wood Panel Industry

3. The registration form submitted by the proposed Group is attached as an Annexe to this note.

Consideration by the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

4. Paragraph 18 of Section 6 of the Code states "...one of the proposed Group's MSP office bearers (usually the Convener) will be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee to explain the justification for the proposed Group." Fergus Ewing MSP has been invited to the meeting to discuss registration of the proposed Group.

Purpose

5. Paragraph 19 Section 6 of the Code states "the Committee will pay particular attention to a proposed Group's purpose. If the Committee considers that a proposed Group is not in the public interest but is intended, for example, to further particular commercial interests, the proposed Group will not be accorded recognition. The Committee will also consider whether the purpose of a proposed Group overlaps the remit of an existing Group. If there is any overlap proposed Groups are asked to provide justification as to why their aims could not effectively be achieved within an existing Group".

6. The stated purpose of the proposed Group is—
 - To support the sustainability and growth of the wood panel industry in Scotland.

7. The proposed Group does not consider its remit overlaps with any other existing Group.

Membership

8. Paragraph 8 of Section 6 of the Code requires group membership to include at least five MSPs, with at least one MSP from each of the parties or groups represented on the Parliamentary Bureau. The Committee has previously agreed that there should be a general waiver of this Rule in the current Session and Groups are now required to have five MSPs from the majority of parties represented on the Parliamentary Bureau. The proposed Group meets this requirement.

9. The MSP membership (by party) of the proposed Group is as follows—

- 4 Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party
- 2 Scottish Labour Party
- 5 Scottish National Party

10. Paragraph 9 of Section 6 of the Code entitles groups to contain members from outwith the Parliament. The proposed Group has listed no non-MSP members in the individual category and two in non-MSP member organisations.

Office Bearers

11. Paragraph 10 of Section 6 of the Code requires one MSP to be Convener of the Group and there to be at least one other MSP office bearer. The proposed Group meets this requirement: Fergus Ewing MSP is the Convener of the proposed Group and Stephen Kerr MSP and Colin Smyth MSP are the Deputy-Conveners.

Financial Benefits and Subscription

12. The registration form indicates that—

- “The Group will receive secretariat support via the Wood Panel Industries Federation. It is anticipated that the cumulative value of this support will exceed the £500 threshold for the coming calendar year.
- A maximum budget of £5,000.00 has been allocated for the provision of secretariat support for the coming calendar year, based on an expectation of 4 to 5 meetings being held.”

13. The registration form also indicates that members of the proposed Group will not be charged a subscription.

Next Steps

14. At agenda item 3 the Committee is invited to discuss any aspects of the application for recognition of the proposed Cross-Party Group on Wood Panel Industry with Fergus Ewing MSP.

15. At agenda item 4 the Committee will discuss whether to accord recognition to the proposed Groups.

Sam Currie
Support Manager
Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee
February 2022

Cross-Party Group Registration Form

<p>Name of Cross-Party Group</p>
<p>Cross-Party Group on the Wood Panel Industry</p>
<p>Purpose of The Group and Proposed Discussion Topics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please state the purpose of the Group. 2. Please also provide a brief explanation of the purpose of the Group and why the purpose is in the public interest. 3. Please also provide details of any overlaps with the purpose of existing Cross-Party Groups and an explanation of why, regardless of any such overlap, the Group should be established. 4. Please also provide an indication of the topics which the Group anticipates discussing in the forthcoming 12 months.
<p>The purpose of the Cross-Party Group on the Wood Panel Industry will be to support the sustainability and growth of the wood panel industry in Scotland.</p> <p>Three of the UK's six wood panel manufacturing plants are located in Scotland (50% of the UK industry), demonstrating the disproportionate importance of the industry to the Scottish economy. The Cross-Party Group on the Wood Panel Industry will work to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highlight and promote the significant contribution made by wood panel manufacturers in Scotland; by providing high-quality jobs (both direct and indirect) and producing wood panel products which are ubiquitous in domestic and commercial settings across Scotland, most notably in construction, furniture production, kitchen unit production and flooring. ● Provide a forum for parliamentarians and senior industry leaders to discuss the challenges around wood security and the hierarchy of wood use, as well as potential long-term strategies to address these issues; within the context of the Scottish Government's ambition to plant 18,000 hectares of woodland by 2024/25 and the Net Zero ambition. ● Highlight the opportunities and challenges for the wood panel industry arising from the decarbonisation agenda, with a view to securing the future sustainability of the sector and ongoing economic benefits. <p>The proposed Group does not consider its remit overlaps with any other existing Group.</p>

Anticipated discussion topics for the Group include:

- Work to highlight the vital contribution that wood panel manufacturers make to the Scottish economy and to promote policies to secure the sustainable growth of this domestic industry.
- Support for increased forestry investment in commercial species to ensure that the wood panel industry enjoys security of domestic wood supply in the medium to longer term.
- Ways to unlock barriers to the drive to achieve Net Zero for the wood panel industry in Scotland; principally through establishing the best use of virgin and waste wood, reducing reliance on fossil fuels in the manufacturing process, and modal shift to low carbon transport systems.
- Ways to maintain UK-wide and global competitiveness by benchmarking the regulatory barriers that may impact the wood panel industry here in Scotland, that may not exist elsewhere.

MSP Members of the Group

Please provide names and party designation of all MSP members of the Group.

Fergus Ewing MSP (SNP)
 Stephen Kerr (Con)
 Colin Smyth (Lab)
 Elena Whitham (SNP)
 Emma Harper (SNP)
 Evelyn Tweed (SNP)
 Finlay Carson (Con)
 Foyso Choudhury (Lab)
 Jim Fairlie (SNP)
 Maurice Golden (Con)
 Sharon Dowey (Con)

Non-MSP Members of the Group

For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.

Individuals	n/a
Organisations	The Wood Panel Industries Federation Invicta Public Affairs

Group Office Bearers

Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is

permissible to have more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.	
Convener	Fergus Ewing MSP
Deputy Convener	Stephen Kerr MSP Colin Smyth MSP
Secretary	The Wood Panel Industries Federation
Treasurer	n/a
<p>Financial Benefits or Other Benefits</p> <p>Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) the Group anticipates receiving from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance such as secretariat support.</p> <p>The Group will receive secretariat support via the Wood Panel Industries Federation. It is anticipated that the cumulative value of this support will exceed the £500 threshold for the coming calendar year.</p> <p>A maximum budget of £5,000.00 has been allocated for the provision of secretariat support for the coming calendar year, based on an expectation of 4 to 5 meetings being held.</p>	
<p>Subscription Charged by the Group</p> <p>Please provide details of the amount to be charged and the purpose for which the subscription is intended to be used.</p> <p>n/a</p>	
<p>Convener Contact Details</p>	
Name	Fergus Ewing MSP
Parliamentary address	M5.03 The Scottish Parliament Edinburgh EH99 1SP
Telephone number	0131 348 5732

Statement on Compliance with The Code Of Conduct

I declare that the Cross-Party Group on the Wood Panel Industry is constituted and will comply with the terms of Section 6 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament.

Signed	
Date	